

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The Help movie is an interesting movie which success gets second debuting at the box office. It is adapted from bestselling novel by Kathryn Stockett, his childhood friend. She gave him rights to make the film adaptation in June 2008, before the book was published. *The Help* movie was released at August 2011 by DreamWorks Pictures.

This movie was directed by Tate Taylor. Besides as a director, he is also an American actor, screen writer and film producer. He was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. Taylor worked for 15 years in New York and Los Angeles. Since 2011 he lives on Wyolah Plantation in Mississippi.

Besides directed *The Help* movie, he also directed and produced *Chicken Party* (2003) and *Pretty Ugly People* (2008) movie. As an American actor he played in the *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion* (1997), *Planet of the Apes* (2001), *I Spy* (2002), *Breaking All the Rules* (2004), *Wannabe* (2005) and *Winters Bone* (2010) movie.

Firstly, after five years Stockett made the novel, the book was rejected by over 60 agents before landing a publisher. Upon reading the book, Taylor and Stockett agreed that he should write and help a feature version. When *The Help* became a literary sensation, their project caught the attention DreamWorks chief, Steven Spielberg, who agreed to back the film on one

condition: he sent veteran filmmaker Chris Columbus not only to serve as producer but also on-set observer to make sure that Taylor was able to keep the project on budget.

The production of the film needs many actors. In *The Help* movie there are many actors that support to release it. The first actor was reported by Emma Stone who played as 'Skeeter Phelan'. She is a white girl who had graduated from the University of Mississippi. After graduating her study there she went back to her beloved family house. The other actors were reported by Viola Davis who played as Aibileen Clark. She is a black maid which about middle age who spent her life to keep white child. In that story Aibileen recently lost her son.

The Help movie has duration about 137 minutes. It tells about the reality of being black woman in Jackson, Mississippi. In the middle of story there is a white woman who has dream being a writer. For first job, she would write about her friend's live. Her friend is the black domestics who work as housekeeper. Her friend is Aibileen Clark.

The story began with Skeeter, a white girl, who had graduated from the University of Mississippi. She is single and wants to begin a career as a writer. She got a job as homemaker columnist in the local paper. Firstly, she wants to interview Constantine, a maid who take care her as childhood. But Constantine has gone, so she went to interview for her help in answering domestic questions. The problem is that she becomes uncomfortable with Hilly Holbrook. Hilly Holbrook has discharged from her job as a maid

because she used the white family's room a bathroom. The bathroom is separated between white and black color of skin because the white families believes that black people carry different diseases from white people but not for Skeeter. She would write a book about the lives of the maids who have spent their entire lives taking care of white children entitled *The Help*.

Eibileen is the first person who share her stories after she overhears Hilly's initiative and realizes that the children whom she has been raising are growing up to be just like their parents. Her friend, Minny, has just been fired as Hilly's maid for using their bathroom during a thunderstorm instead of going to use the separate outdoor toilet. Skeeter begin writing a draft of the Aibileen and Hilly's story and send it to an editor Harper and Row in New York. The editor believe that the book will be the best seller, she ask Skeeter to finish it soon.

The book is almost finished except for Skeeter's own story of being brought up by Constantine. She asks her mother to tell about Constantine. After managing to find where Constantine is, she discovered that she had died not long after leaving Jackson. She has no choice another finishing the book without Constantine. After writing the book, the publication is successfull. She shares her royalties with each of the maids who contributed and is offered a job with a publishing company in New York.

There are some reasons why the writer analyzes this movie. First, *The Help* movie is directed by great director who is adapted from the novel that is his childhood friend's as the writer. They are Tate Taylor and Kathryn

Stockett. Kathryn Stockett gave him rights to make the film adaptation in June 2008, before the book was published.

Second, *The Help* movie is one of most popular movie in the world. It gets some awards for the actress. At January 2012 this film got four academic nomination awards and belongs to the best pictures. Then at January, 29 2012 *The Help* was won Screen Actors Guild for bright job by the actors in the Motion Pictures.

Third, the film was thought us about courageous. Eibileen is the first maid who agrees to talk about her live as domestic. Difference of race doesn't make her frighten if she would lost the job and violence happened for her. The reason is because she was motivated by a desire to remember her late son.

Fourth, the movie gives positive messages to the viewer. In the story Skeeter Phelan as white person would help the black domestic. In which as physical appearance they are very different but Skeeter Phelan still would help them. Skeeter Phelan has helped them by writing a book.

Fifth, *The Help* movie is relates to feminism. Almost of the story in this movie is discrimination about skin colors of woman. The black domestic works for white families. Their life is only dedicated for the white families.

By considering reasons above *The Help* movie in this study will be analyzed by using feminist approach. The title of this study is *Race and Gender Discrimination Reflected in the Tate Taylor's The Help Movie (2011): a Feminist Approach*.

B. Previous Study

The Help movie is an interesting movie. As far as the writer concern the paper, it's no other research that has analyzed it. *The Help* movie is a new release film. It was released on August 2011. There is no student in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta who has analyzed *The Help* movie.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the statement above, the writer formulates the problem "How race and gender discrimination are reflected in the Tate Taylor's *The Help* movie?"

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research paper, the writer focuses on analyzing race and gender discrimination reflected in the Tate Taylor's *The Help* movie based on a feminist approach.

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- a. To analyze *The Help* movie based on the structural element of the movie.
- b. To analyze race and gender discrimination reflected in *The Help* movie based on a feminist approach.

F. Benefits of the Study

The writer hopes that this study has the benefits are as follow:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The study is projected to give movie contribution and information to the larger body of knowledge, particularly in the literary studies on *The Help* movie.

2. Practical Benefit

The study is expected to enrich the knowledge and experience of the writer and other students at UMS or other university interested in literary studies especially on feminist theory.

G. Research Method

The writer will describe the methods that are used in this research.

There are five elements to support in this research, they are as follows:

1. Type of the Study

In this study, the writer uses qualitative research. The data sources are library and literary data. Its purpose is to analyze using feminist approach. The steps to conduct the research are as follows: 1). determining the type of the study, 2). determining the object of the study, 3). determining data and data source, 4). determining technique of data collection and finally 5). determining technique of data analysis.

2. Object of the Study

The object of this study is *The Help* movie by Tate Taylor and was first premiered in 2011 by Hollywood studios.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

There are two types of data, namely primary and secondary data, as follows:

- a. Primary Data: the primary data source is *The Help* movie was produced by DreamWorks Pictures.
- b. Secondary Data: The secondary data sources are book or any information related to the race and gender that support the feminist analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The techniques of data collection are as follows:

- a. Watching the movie repeatedly.
- b. Taking note of important parts both primary and secondary data.
- c. Arranging the data into several groups based on its theoretical category.
- d. Selecting particular parts considered important and relevant for analysis.
- e. Drawing conclusion and formulate its pedagogical suggestion.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the writer applies a descriptive approach. The steps taken by the writer in analyzing the data are as follows: the first in analyzing the data based on its structural elements. Focus will be paid on the structural analysis of the movie. The second step in analyzing the data based on the feminist approach. Focus will be paid on the race and gender.

H. Research Paper Organization

This research paper is divided into six chapters. Chapter I is introduction. It consist of background of the study, previous study, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the study, benefits of the study, research method and research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory. It elaborates the theory of feminism, literary criticism, and basic principle of feminism. Chapter III is social-historical background of the American society at the early twenty first century. It is consist of social, economic, politics, science and technology, cultural and religious aspect. Chapter IV is the structural analysis of the movie. It is consist of narrative element and technical element. Chapter V is data analysis and discussion about the discriminationof race and gender in the movie by using a feminist approach. Chapter VI draws conclusion and suggestion.